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EDUCATIONAL FUND.

SPEECH

OF

HON. JUSTIN S. MORRILL,

OF VERMONT,

IN THE

SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

APRIL 26, 1876.



WASHINGTON.
1876.

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SPEECH
OF
HON. JUSTIN S. MORRILL.

The Senate having under consideration, as in Committee of the Whole, the bill (S. No. 334) to establish an educational fund and apply a portion of the proceeds of the public lands to public education, and to provide for the more complete endowment and support of national colleges for the advancement of scientific and industrial education—

Mr. MORRILL, of Vermont, said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: The measure I have called up to-day has for its object the aid of common schools and some further assistance to the national colleges. Other propositions are pending, both here and in the other House, in relation to this subject; but with all earnest men, if the leading purposes mentioned can be secured, the details will be of minor importance.

I start with the proposition that all of our public lands, which are hereafter to be sold and are not called for as free homesteads, should be held exclusively for educational purposes—purposes that tower high above and dwarf all others. Should any exception to this rule ever be suggested, let it then be considered on its merits.

SCHOOL LANDS DONATED.

We have already given to States, without regard to their population, 140,000,000 acres of land for the support of common schools, and eighteen of the States thus aided have a school fund of \$43,866,785. The western or new States, as to common schools, would appear to have been liberally provided for. In the North and East the system of common schools has long held a foremost place in the hearts of the people, and cheerful contributions to their support by self-imposed taxation are made with all the regularity of the seasons. At the South they are far less advanced, and having no accumulated school funds, their people are at present unequal to the task of establishing and adequately maintaining such schools without some national assistance, not national control, although not unmindful of their utility and fully appreciating their urgent necessity. When even in Spain it is no longer immoral for women to know how to read, and when Sweden and Turkey engage in universal education, no American State will be found to hold back.

All statistics are dry—interesting to few and entertaining to none—and some are by no means pleasant or even tolerable to contemplate; but legislators, like surgeons, must probe the ugliest sores, and courageously examine even such facts as those I am reluctantly about to expose.

SCHOOL POPULATION.

Our school population of five years of age to seventeen inclusive is 12,055,443, or nearly one-third of our entire population. A mighty host, led now and controlled by us, but soon to control us and lead the van of civilization in the land of their fathers. Only about one-half of this number, or 6,545,112, attend schools of any sort, and

among all of the four or five million of colored population only 180,372 attend school, or hardly enough to furnish a silver lining to a cloud so dark. Five million and a half of our population cannot write and four million and a half cannot read. Of illiterate male adults, twenty years of age and over, we have 1,611,213, of which number 748,470 are whites. There are thus more illiterate voters, among either white or colored, than the usual majority of any party taking part at any national election. They are, therefore, the potent auxiliaries of all parties, the decisive make-weights, and must more or less control the destinies of the country. Can any happy augury of ages to come be drawn from these dismal facts? "Do men gather grapes of thorns?"

The liberty and equality of an immense number of illiterate people, unmarked by intellectual eminence of any sort, empty of all virtuous gratitude springing from the memories of childhood and the school-room toward a parental government, is not such a state or condition as freemen toil for, nor such as they can be expected to maintain, love, and cherish. Along with entire liberty and equality before the law we behold among mankind the foremost and the hindermost as well, and there will be distinctions and differences in both the power and the industry of mankind, and both of hand and brain, with no two alike among them all, good or bad. It should be the mission of American legislators to offer sure means for the greatest possible development of this power and industry, and to diminish inequality by leveling upward and not downward. Thus only shall we be able to prove that republican institutions, quick to perceive and to foster the most exalted personal merits and qualifications, will neither dwarf the state nor the people. Thus only shall we show that our boasted equality is not inferiority to everybody else.

The several States are greatly interested in the removal of the deep-seated illiteracy to which I have referred, but by no means exclusively, as the interest of the General Government covers the same territory and embraces all and the same voters. The election of President of the United States and of members of Congress cannot be reckoned as less grave and important work than that of State governors and Legislatures. The parts are not greater than the whole.

Through the latest action of the people upon the national Constitution we have bestowed universal suffrage upon our fellow-citizens in all of the States. The nation is primarily responsible for this action, and, while accepting of its advantages, must shield itself as well as the States from the resulting possible perils. The increased magnitude of the burden which has been imposed by the sovereign will of the nation manifestly ought to be borne by the nation. Universal suffrage must be made a blessing and an honor to our country, not a curse to the citizen, nor to the States and the nation. Every one of our citizens has been crowned with equal power in the guidance of national and State affairs; but they have thus far had too little of our aid to fit them even to guide themselves. Many of the States resolutely assume their full share of the great responsibility, and raise by taxation and expend nearly \$100,000,000 annually for common schools; and, when so much more is obviously required, shall the General Government look on with total indifference, contributing nothing?

CONSTITUTIONAL POWER.

Not only is the General Government profoundly interested in the enlightened and virtuous character of our whole people, but it has the exclusive power touching the disposal of the public lands, the largest

and most appropriate educational resource by which that character has been and may be elevated and its deficiencies remedied. The language of the Constitution is:

The Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.

No grant of power could be more ample, none more explicit, and it must be exercised. It should not sleep and it cannot be delegated to other parties. Congress itself must dispose of the lands and make such rules and regulations as it chooses. If it appears needful and proper to dispose of this property for educational purposes, the noblest of all purposes, the power of Congress is supreme, and it can and ought so to ordain. Even if the pathway were less obvious, we have an unerring guide-board in the great ordinance of 1787, reflecting so much honor upon our ancestors, which not only provided the flaming sword to keep the great West free from "slavery and involuntary servitude," but also proclaimed this educational purpose in the strongest and most unequivocal terms, as will be found in one of its prominent articles, namely:

ART. 3. Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.

These terms, made and declared at the time of the cession of the lands as "a compact between the original States," are mandatory as to our duty—national duty—in the premises. "Schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged," not by States alone but by this national fund. The logical concomitants of religion, morality and good government, could not otherwise be secured. We must adhere for all time to this compact, or be justly charged with a plain and palpable breach of a sacred trust.

The Government promised what it would do when it took charge of the land fund, and that promise cannot be avoided by the cranky plea that the Government has nothing to do with education. American citizens are not dependent paupers, and it is no humiliation for them, in spite of all cant phrases, to ask for what is their due. They form a great co-partnership, having, among other privileges, an equal interest in the education and perfection of all its members, and the poorest member is entitled to something better than his unaided resources might otherwise have afforded. If this were not true the association would be a failure, and, after all, the best form of government, controlled by illiterate bunglers, might prove to be the worst. The great crises of our so-called political experiment have passed away. Even the greed of territorial acquisitions and the passion to extend our rule over foreigners, the terrible fanaticism of republics, it is to be hoped has been satiated, and, with ample resources for prosperous trade and commercial independence, it now remains to us as our chiefest concern to establish a more solid basis of hope for our future career through a broader and higher education, adapted to the genius and taste of the American people.

If Congress has a binding duty to perform relative to education—next to religion the highest concern of mankind—it has also a duty scarcely inferior in its scope as to the discharge of an important trust, no less than that of the disposal of the residue of our whole public domain, in such manner as will best promote the present and future welfare, moral and material, of a great, enterprising, and exacting people, and in strict accordance with the terms of our compact.

Is it not a providential conjuncture that, while this moral exigency looms up before us, a national resource of ample dimensions is also waiting as a remedy for this very exigency—a resource unexhausted even by unthrifty husbandry, and which the common voice of the country will agree by acclamation should not be disposed of without a full equivalent, nor for any purpose less than the most sacred? The high duty of ownership, the great trust of the original States, long swaying to and fro, can now be fully, fittingly, and nobly discharged.

The present depleted and unsatisfactory financial condition of many of the Southern States, however substantial the latent elements of their future prosperity may be, needs neither proof nor illustration. None of us can remain unmindful of their wants, and Congress will in any constitutional manner move with alacrity to their relief when it can be done without detriment to the Republic, as here it may be, and done patriotically, with national as well as local advantage. These States need all the aid we can properly grant for both common schools and colleges, and they will still have to rely, in the race with their sister States and the world, largely upon their own efforts and enthusiasm to place themselves on the road to equal rank with those where educational institutions are more deeply rooted and where they have already given promise of good and abundant fruit.

EDUCATION THE RIGHT OF AMERICANS.

But while general education must be recognized as the common outfit of all men and the indisputable right of Americans, special and a more comprehensive education has become more than ever necessary to qualify each citizen for his own peculiar duties and position in life. Our latest civilization and the division of labor have opened new destinies and greater fortunes to mankind by wondrously multiplying the more productive and more remunerative occupations in modern society. New educational wants, keeping pace with a century and a half of marked original research, have been rapidly created, and nowhere perhaps more conspicuously than in the United States. The older colleges and universities have served well and, although the relative value of studies is not settled, with the modifications going on, will serve well to continue the eminence accorded to their system of literary education for those who are to obtain subsequent professional or special training; yet, as the sole reliance and last resort of the whole people, they are not only unequally distributed, but they have been hitherto either unable or unwilling to indulge much curiosity for any explorations outside of moss-covered traditions, and have given too little prominence to such scientific studies as might be most useful to the largest numbers, and strangely because of an obsolete theory that such would be accounted as of some use in practical life. A still more serious objection lies in the fact that the usual college course now costs triple the sum required fifty years ago. This objection is a growing one and should be overcome by larger public patronage or be checked by wholesome competition. The ladders by which boys climb from common schools to a college education should not be placed beyond the reach of the common people.

There is, therefore, a boundless field to be occupied by colleges which can and will give to students nowhere else provided for a greater proportion of time to the learning, which is not only disciplinary, but really valuable for its own sake and helpful as some part of the foundation to a chosen sphere in the affairs of a busy world. The tardy process of self-culture, by which men of mark have sometimes made their way, and which to large numbers, postponed until maturity points

to other tasks, is the only process available, should be aided at the earliest moment by colleges that will enable a larger portion of those who cannot live without earning their living to bring forth and temper all the advantages of genius and talent with which by nature they have been endowed. Uncomputed numbers, with unknown and uncomputed power, ought not to be suffered so largely to run to waste. We are often sad to think of the greater possibilities which even men not destitute of all fame have barely missed through some slight mischance or short-coming, but we rarely mourn and ponder over the wide possibilities of the unknown multitude fated to live in the shade without culture or sunshine and who fall at last, like crowded trees in the unvisited forest, with all their latent strength and beauty to slumber forever with the moldering past. Among our people there is much of this valuable timber that a Republic promising so grandly as to race, position, and period cannot afford to leave in the back-ground to utter waste. No; each one is—

A living thing,
Produced too slowly ever to decay;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed.

DISCONTENT OF LABORING-MEN.

Throughout the world, not excepting our own country, there is a deeply-seated feeling of discontent among laboring-men, not that they must labor, for that they are not unwilling, but that so large a share of labor is wholly rude, unlettered, and so rarely loved or respected. Necessity binds them to an unending routine, often transmitted from one unskilled generation to the next, with no training and no guidance up the steep ascent to a higher plane of more congenial toil and to a better intellectual and social life. They feel that much of the existing intellectual superiority with which they have to compete is not entirely natural, but largely artificial, or only the usual and inevitable advantage bestowed by schools and colleges, which, as they believe, ought to embrace a broader field to which they might furnish a much larger proportion of recruits and by which they could make their leisure hours too precious to be spent in idle dissipation. Something of the legitimate distinction conferred by human approbation, now and then a prize among so many blanks, even workmen, the most industrious and upright, have a laudable ambition to achieve, or to have their children achieve, as they might, if the gate-ways of toil bore not too generally that fearful motto, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

Pent-up discontent in worn and weary hearts is not less explosive than pent-up steam. Among the stern wrestlers with the world there are many striving for the mastery of the bottom knowledge and skill—now more than ever necessary—to do more and better work, and thereby to obtain not only somewhat greater pecuniary rewards but such honors as they may fairly earn; not specially political honors, for they know as well as those who have tasted such that they are but ashes in the mouths of even the most voracious. Let them be qualified for any service, but above the need of political employment. A slight difference of earning-power often determines human happiness or human misery. Some opportunity for improvement, for that training which the wisest of men are eager to obtain and find indispensable must be conceded and tendered to this vast human force, which, if not wisely directed, may be mischievously directed, or, if not directed by those to whom it belongs, it will be directed by demagogues to whom it ought not to belong and whose trade ought

not to be encouraged. The ever-active toilers, pursuing their vocations with an absenteeism of the heart, are visibly restless under what seems to them the unescapable servitude of their whole class. Each one harbors Shakspeare's mistaken conviction:

Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand.

An opportunity only is wanted by good men to acquire such qualifications as will afford through diligent effort some hope of creditable eminence even while earning their daily bread or some chance to make laborious employments here and there blaze with a few examples of their own shining lights, and possibly to perpetuate the memory of genius, enterprise, and greatness based upon honest industry and worthy manhood. No one here feels that poverty is a disgrace, but the disgrace arises when there is no effort by industry and education to escape from it. Our Government, the United States, provoking so much attention as it does in the history of the world by its unexampled growth, can afford neither cowardice nor indolence, and should awake to its grave responsibilities by being foremost to respond to educational demands so earnest, so reasonable, and so easily satisfied.

NATIONAL CHARACTER.

Some learned sophists have claimed that the National Government is not responsible for the national character, that it has no personality, and no duties as to moral elevation or as to education of any kind; and they have also even averred that education can give no guarantee to republican institutions. This is an extreme enunciation of the doctrine of nihilism or of the governmental do-nothing policy, and it follows that the Government should have no conscience, no sense of honor, and be as unmindful of itself as the thistle-blow, when wafted hither and thither by whatever windy currents chance to prevail, with no power of will to choose whether to grow or to perish by the way-side, and if by chance to grow, with no power to propagate anything but thistles. The denial of governmental personality is the disease of atheism, which covets all the sorrows but none of the joys or hopes of life, and is compatible only with a ruling despotism.

But this doctrine is alien to the fundamental idea of our form of government and wide away from the mile-stones which mark its pathway from the start. It was intended that our Government should have special regard to its own character, should exhibit the foresight and statesmanship of the people, and, finally, that it should live and not die. It was never intended that its sole functions should be to punish crime, keep the peace, collect taxes, and put down rebellion, and after that to let the world slide. Though we have freedom, wealth, and courage, and have not character, have not virtue and knowledge, we are nothing—less than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Long ago that sturdy puritanic republican, John Milton, set forth the doctrine, by no means alien to our own era, that "a common-wealth ought to be but as one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth and stature of an honest man." Again he declared, that "to make the people fitted to govern will be to mend our corrupt and faulty education." The formula of John Locke was that "the end of government was the good of mankind." These were some of the principles that guided the robust founders of our own Republic. In the very heart and core of our institutions all the virtues were to find a home. The people here ordained and established a government for

the people; their obedience under it was to be obedience to themselves; and they have always felt and always will feel that to it attaches some responsibility for their own national character and that of their posterity. They strove here in the New World to exalt the race of mankind and to build up model institutions. The good of the governed, in the highest political sense of perennial and perfect health, was the chief object, and that could not be secured by constitutional indifference to their virtue and their moral and intellectual elevation. The national character was not to be exalted by faith without works, but by ideas and sentiments springing from a broader education, which inspire manly efforts, and fill and fructify youthful minds.

The States, it is true, have much to do, but the national Government, superior in its higher nature and wider scope, has more important work to do, having given to each State the guarantee of a republican form of government, a guarantee impossible of fulfillment, as our wisest men have never denied, without general and thorough education. Rich universities abroad, if not at home, possibly with a minimum of outspoken partiality to republican institutions and a Ciceronian contempt for labor,* may be supported by the voluntary aid of wealth or by the generosity of men flickering in their exit from the world, but such aid rarely steps forth to lift up the masses, whose education has never been supported by spontaneous and continued charity, and can only be firmly supported under the auspices and direct inspiration of government. The national Government, however, is not here called upon to do much, but its flag should march at the head of the great uplifting procession, and cannot afford to hide away in cheap non-committalism when the dignity and character if not the future glory of its citizens are dependent upon its leadership.

To support the character of our national Government and its honor every citizen willingly stands ready to sacrifice not only property but life itself; and shall it be said for this the Government is to do nothing in return? Are there no reciprocal duties? Stripped of personality, character, dignity, virtue, and moral elevation as a basis of governmental duties, what would there be left to love, or what that patriotism would rush to defend? What that a Christian would pray might be immortal? The character of a nation clearly does not altogether depend upon its geology, climate, soil, oysters, and terrapins, but very much upon its governmental and educational institutions and upon that growth of manhood which is their ripened product. Great living may be very well, but a great life is far better. No nation is more sensitive to the estimate of others than the American people.

Nor is it enough that "the upper ten thousand" of cities have culture and that each rural village has its luminous ring of the educated minister, lawyer, and doctor. The magic circle should be more broadly expanded and include the whole country instead of scattered microscopic patches. Under a free government the nation acquires rank, not by a few daintily-polished individuals, the bell-wethers of a feeble flock, but by the intelligence and majesty of the entire community; not by one stone superbly cut, but by the proportions and grandeur of the completed edifice.

THE COLORED RACE.

But it may be objected that this policy includes all, without regard to race or color; and why not? Are we to praise freedom and shirk

* "The occupations of all artisans," says Cicero, "are base, and the shop can have nothing of the respectable."

the duty of making it better than slavery? Having emancipated a whole race, shall it be said there our duty ends, leaving the race as cumberers of the ground, to live or to wilt and perish, as the case may be? They are members of the American family—forever in sight—and their advancement concerns us all. While swiftly forgetting all they ever knew as slaves, shall they have no opportunity to learn anything as freemen? They are to be the sources of great strength or of great weakness, of glory or shame. "It is impossible," says a recent English writer, "that the knowledge which is power in one race can be absolutely impotent in another." This appears to me to be a truth, pertinent to us and our times, which we shall do well to consider. Surely the American Congress will not emulate the courtly cruelty of the Duke of Alva, that minion of Philip II, who promised to some prisoners life, but, when they petitioned for food, replied that "he would grant them life but no meat." Shall we grant liberty and then refuse it all nourishment?

ECONOMY.

I well know that the present is a time when, in the interest of sound economy, all worthless schemes, every doubtful expenditure, all windy humbugs, as well as all sinecures, should be—will be—pitilessly slaughtered, and I mean to contribute, as I trust I have never failed to do, my full share of work to that kind of slaughter; but unwise, bat-eyed economy may often be actual prodigality or the saving of seed-corn at the expense of the whole crop; and it would be a portentous omen to the future destinies of our country if aid and encouragement to learning and science, to schools and colleges, should be doomed to crucifixion in such disreputable company. Upon the broadest principles of the purest and most far-reaching economy, the friends of the present bill base its highest claims to public favor, and it cannot be put down by a hue and cry raised to crush measures of a far different character, with which it has neither kinship nor affinity.

It may not improperly be claimed that this measure really plants the seeds of a future harvest of revenue and will in the end not only augment the productions of industry and increase the wealth of the country, but that it will thereby add considerably to the receipts of the Treasury, which always rise or fall with the general prosperity; and beyond all this, so far as a broader education rapidly tends to multiply the number of letter-writers, or promotes the interchange of ideas and courtesies, as well as of commodities, it may be expected to contribute something toward lifting up even the Post-Office Department nearer to a self-supporting condition. The first year of common schools in Great Britain increased their postal revenue over \$3,000,000. It is then by no means fanciful dreaming to claim this school and college bill incidentally as a revenue measure, and that its passage will ultimately actually increase the revenues of the country.

In every great enterprise it is true we must consider what we are to lose as well as what we are to gain. By the proposed measure of further aid to national colleges and a very substantial contribution to common schools, we shall gradually part with our title to the ownership of a limited quantity of land—small in comparison with the bulk of our possessions—from which the policy of acquiring ordinary revenue long ago practically ceased. Broad acres we shall still offer free to all who ask for homes. But for revenue purposes the public lands can now furnish no regular basis, and their value ought to be held as far too precious to be bartered for merely moneyed equivalents. that must be swallowed up at once in ordinary expenditures.

On the other side, the gain here proposed to be slowly derived from any sales of these lands will be a perpetual educational fund, retained in the custody of the nation and kept, like the heat of the summer sun, forever undiminished, while barely the interest thereon will be annually expended by each State for the culture and enlightenment of all their coming generations.

By this fund we first promote primary education by aiding State systems of common schools, and then we are to have institutions of learning—at least one college—in every State, planted on foundations not very magnificent, it is true, but as broad and firm as the foundations of the Government itself, by which a more complete education in every portion of the Union will be brought within the reach of larger numbers—too poor to seek it in any modern Athens or Rome—and to whom it will give that “crown and scepter” which thorough education always gives, but gives, alas! to too few. Surely, what we are to gain, as indicated even by this tame and stinted recital, is far more precious, far more considerable, than what we are to lose. In fact, it is an error to assume that we are to lose anything when we rescue and preserve for ages that which might otherwise in some earlier or later flood of congressional grants disappear altogether, leaving no enduring trace behind except the record of sundry petty schemes with the “hungry edge” of local appetite for such schemes sharpened rather than satisfied.

But even the relatively insignificant portion of the public domain which can now under any circumstances be appropriated for the purposes here indicated will in many ways contribute to the strength and glory of our country. It will be the disposal of the surplus part of the national farm—of a few back lots—for the permanent improvement of the remainder, and for increasing the skill and all the forces of those charged with its future ownership and productive development.

RAILROADS.

It may be that some friends of further subsidies to railroads would still prefer such projects to any policy of education. It is apparent that the whole world have invested too lavishly in railroads, we more than any others, for the interest of the present generation, however beneficial the investments may or may not prove hereafter. Without any national system in the location, but a “mighty maze” of discordant lines, it is not strange that an immense capital has been sunk. From the present temper of the people, it may be assumed that land subsidies have accomplished all they can accomplish and have spent their force. We have donated to railroads 210,756,807 acres of land, which at double the minimum price, though often fetching much more, will amount to \$526,892,017. Will not that suffice? I am sometimes forcibly reminded of the “fable of the lion and other beasts hunting,” where it is shown how the lion takes “the lion’s share,” having divided the prey into three parts, appropriating the first to himself as king, the second to himself for his share in the chase, and defying anybody to lay hand on the third. Certainly the railroads appear to have taken “the lion’s share,” having divided the prey and appropriating the first part as king, the second to themselves as their share in the chase, and now will they defy anybody to lay hand on the third? We shall see.

MILITARY AND NAVAL SCHOOLS.

Very early the national Government founded the Military Academy, and subsequently the Naval School. This was done in harmony with the statesmanship of past ages, and in accordance with modern ex-

amples, to make the most of the human fighting force of nations. Nothing was to be spared necessary to educate and train men in the most skillful methods of destroying their enemies. A previous national declaration of the purpose, it is understood, makes wholesale manslaughter a glorious achievement. Even an education pointing to such an end as this, embracing a considerable share of science, with the modern languages and much of the martial and naval history and philosophy of mankind, as well as the polish of methodical discipline, has given a certain degree of superiority to those entitled to wear the uniform of their class. Like ancient knights, they outranked the common people, who seemed to shrivel up in their presence, and to this day, often without the merit of heroic services, they are accorded precedence over the most distinguished civilians, with only the oratorical exceptions, perhaps, of "bright particular stars" among the legal profession.

Would this be so if the great masses of the people, engaged for life in pursuits for the support of themselves and the institutions of human government and the adornment of Christian society, received that training of the schools which favors the arts of peace and the knowledge and skill which produces not only men of the highest value to themselves and the world, but which will hasten on the millennium of national arbitrations, instead of more and more sad and bloody pages of human history?

It is not any reproach that military and naval officers master their professions in schools supported by the Government, unless it is done with no intent to render any service therefor, or because the education is esteemed better than is to be found elsewhere, giving, as it really does, a high standard of duty, order, and military honor; but it is a reproach that governmental duties there stop. The defenders of the country are vastly important, in war indispensable; so are all whom they defend, or defenders would not be required. And while the latter are educated and then maintained through life, the former, by whose constant toil not only soldiers and sailors are maintained but the Government itself, ought not to be dismissed as below the military standard in height without some provision that they too may have the proper educational armor to become masters in their own battle-fields of industry.

While the world is in a transition state and all lands do not yet rest from war, the art cannot be wholly neglected, inasmuch as it is still true that "one sword keeps another in its scabbard," and therefore something of military science and discipline as an incident of these national colleges is provided for and will be obtained by all of their students, supplying in any emergency to each State a valuable aggregate of available knowledge, and that without any charge to the National Government.

WHAT THE NATIONAL COLLEGES HAVE DONE.

But the pertinent inquiry may be made, what have the colleges, started under the act of 1862, done that gives room to hope for their success or that entitles them to further favor? It may be too early to seek a full answer to this question, but there is no reason why it should be evaded. To call them a failure "would be," as the president of Dartmouth College lately said to me, "as absurd as to call the day a failure when we had seen but half an hour of it." It is unwise to despise small beginnings, for they often forerun great things. It will at once be noted that nearly one-third of these colleges have not yet had time to get into working order, but by the

latest reports which I have examined twenty-eight of them, while yet in the cradle of their existence, had 3,842 students with 356 instructors, being an average of 137 students and 12.7 instructors respectively. Compare this with the 323 older institutions, the growth of a century, which in 1873 had no more than 25,010 students and 3,108 instructors, or only an average of 77 students and 9.6 instructors respectively. Surely these facts, so early developed as budding evidences of honor and usefulness, will put to flight any doubts as to the amount of work being done or as to the share of public consideration they are receiving, and the national colleges may now fearlessly challenge the support of the most cautious legislators. Upheld by the industrial classes as well as by nearly all of the scientific men of the country, as they are and will be, their success cannot be doubtful; and let me ask for what other 15,000,000 million acres of public land has the Government so much to show?

These colleges are often called "*agricultural colleges*," perhaps because here for the first time agriculture obtained equal favor, or even any attention, or because several States have given that name to their institutions as an honorable distinction, or possibly the term may be sometimes derisively applied, as though it were an absurdity to expect any growth of science and learning from an agricultural college; but while it is true that all sciences related to agriculture are to be included and must be and are taught in these national institutions, though not to so great an extent as it is to be hoped they yet will be, there is nothing excluded touching any other industrial, mechanical, or even classical interests. The charter is broad, covering no sham, no inferior work, and if it had been made narrower, these colleges would not only have been less useful but even more exposed to narrow and jealous criticism, and certainly would not have escaped the sneers of those who flout the name of *agricultural colleges* as a damaging epithet or as a brand of reproach. Ignorantly they have possibly bestowed a watch-word of talismanic power which may both plague and shame the inventors. The clubs of jealousy and passion do not always remain in the hands of those who first bring them into the conflict.

By the law of 1862 the several States were to establish at least one college, and, being unrestricted, they could rightfully bestow such names upon their respective colleges as they pleased, so long as they brought the character of the institutions within the terms prescribed by the act of Congress. Is it not puerile to criticise the public taste about mere names? A college is not specially a "union college" because it has been so named, nor is a college merely a town college, though bearing the name of some town.

Not less unreasonable is it to expect that all graduates of the national colleges must become agriculturists and forever follow the plow. They have the right to do that or anything else they choose; to be artists, mechanics, surveyors, merchants, teachers, lawyers, doctors, or ministers; but whatsoever they are, they will be better for being thoroughly and scientifically equipped, and they will also be better able to tender more or less valuable aid to all branches of industry, despising none.

The total number of professional men in the United States educated or who should have been educated at classical colleges is only 146,993,* while agriculturists are numbered by millions and consequently should hold, as they do, prominent privileges in the national colleges;

*Lawyers, 40,736; clergymen, 43,874; physicians and surgeons, 62,383; total 146,993.

but they neither ask nor hold any exclusive privileges. All the useful arts, all mechanical and industrial employments, are hopefully recognized and offered an impartial support. (Classical studies are by no means ignored, but are provided for all those who have time to acquire them and who may have occasion for their future display, and for those who are free from care and solicitude as to present and future maintenance.) Scientific knowledge, however, in spite of all doubts, is as sublime and as beautiful as any other—so thought Bacon and Newton and so thought Franklin and Agassiz—and being also both commonly and grandly useful it here has a leading position, and what are usually esteemed as elegant and ornamental courses of study, asked for by the present limited class of the so-called learned professions and by gentlemen of leisure, come in as of secondary importance, as they must come, on the field and in the work-shop, in the counting-room and in the factory.

It is proposed to offer the means for a generous and sound education, not without a body for its feathers and with a steady leaning toward such branches as will assist young men in their work when they reach their ultimate field of duty and prevent them from forsaking that field because of its monotony or because of its exclusion from all the graces and attractions of the schools. Is it in vain to seek to embellish the daily life of physical labor with something of the luster of intellectual discipline? The brain is certainly not to be wholly neglected because it clings to such home-bred allies as bone and muscle, which do more and far better work when wisely guided by a well-trained head.

I find an account of fifteen farms attached to the national colleges, which average three hundred and fifty acres each, and they are rapidly getting to be farms of model excellence, where many of the most valuable experiments are made and where, to some extent, the best breeds of stock are constantly exhibited. What is done is not hid under a bushel. These farms with stock and tools are expensive, and some of the colleges are yet without the requisite funds to secure or to maintain them. Several of the States have already supplied these deficiencies. The aid here proposed would enable all to move more satisfactorily in this direction, while it would furnish resources for more efficient work in many other respects.

If the number of college students proposing to be farmers is less than it should be, so much the more need is there of creating and cultivating a taste in that direction, and it must never be forgotten that lack of means for long terms of study makes all colleges almost inaccessible to the vast majority of mankind. It requires also some intrepidity, even for boys inured to labor, to avow that they are preparing to work with their hands, even with skilled hands, as well as with brains, among associates many of whom are rather too proudly setting out to work and shine only with the latter; but the number attending the national colleges with such earnest purposes is much larger than is supposed or than make any proclamation of their intentions in advance, and the facilities for obtaining all the present available theoretical and technical knowledge of agricultural science has been in most cases, and will be in all, liberally provided.

According to the late census our entire male population, ten years old and over, was 14,258,866, and 5,525,503 of these were engaged in agriculture, besides 400,000 females so engaged. Almost one-half of our whole population, it thus appears, are devoted to agriculture. They have, therefore, in numbers alone paramount claims to consideration, and beyond such claims there underlies the vital problem of

a future supply of cheap food, upon the abundance of which hinge the growth and maintenance of a great people with great and constantly expanding wants. No extent of land can be sufficient without a sufficiency of competent and willing labor. The vocation of farming and husbandry must be made both attractive and lucrative, or it will be, as it has been, renounced at every decade by an increasing number of deserters. The pursuit of money-getting alone—all-pervading as the passion may be—is unsatisfactory, and those who furnish food for the whole body of mankind may reasonably demand some share of mental sustenance or at least may demand the crumbs which drop from the tables of the learned.

THE PRODUCTIVE POWER OF FARMS DECREASING.

It is also a fact well ascertained that as a whole our soil is being rapidly reduced in its productive power. I have heretofore called attention to this fact as exhibited in every census return since 1840. Our husbandry appears to be based upon the wants of the nineteenth century alone and refuses to speculate on the wants of the twentieth. Present profits, not the increased and fixed value of farms, absorb attention. By our too general habit of uncompensated cropping it is plain that we are steadily exhausting the fertility of the land in the new as well as the older States. The wheat region retreats westwardly as relentlessly as the march of some fearful epidemic; in the land of the Puritans they are almost as dependent for corn as they were in the days of Miles Standish, when Indians furnished a scant supply; and now the grasshopper plague seems on the wing challenging even the westward empire of the farmer.

The census of 1870, notwithstanding the evidences of a rapid development of wealth and population, discloses some unwelcome facts. With a much larger acreage and millions more of population, as compared with 1860, there was only a small gain in wheat, oats, butter, and potatoes, while there was an absolute diminution, incredible as it may appear, of cattle, swine, corn, rye, rice, tobacco, cotton, cheese, sugar, and molasses.* Improved implements now enable farmers to cultivate double the quantity of land cultivated by their fathers, one man with the reaper doing the work of ten men, and thereby securing with less laborers greater present profits; but by this grasping, broad-gauged husbandry, by too infrequent rotation of crops, by too little reliance upon manual labor and home-made manure, and the dire exhaustion which follows the exportation of cereal crops, they also secure a larger deterioration of the soil, and the general crop per acre

*United States census returns.

	1860.	1870.
Neat cattle.....	23, 967, 028	23, 074, 582
Swine.....	33, 512, 867	25, 134, 569
Rye.....bush..	21, 101, 380	16, 918, 795
Corn.....bush..	838, 792, 742	760, 944, 549
Rice.....lbs..	187, 167, 032	73, 635, 021
Tobacco.....lbs..	434, 209, 461	202, 735, 341
Cheese.....lbs..	103, 663, 927	53, 492, 153
Cotton.....bales..	5, 387, 052	3, 011, 996
Sugar.....hhds..	230, 982	87, 043
Sugar, maple.....lbs..	40, 120, 205	28, 443, 645
Molasses, maple.....galls..	1, 597, 589	921, 057
Molasses, cane.....galls..	14, 963, 996	6, 593, 323

year by year grows perceptibly less. Our fast and thoughtless machine-farming makes us forget that the earth can ever grow old and unfruitful.

Surely it will not be improper to give some heed to the lesson brought to our notice by such ominous and irrefutable facts. The only amendment possible is through a better and more scientific treatment of the soil as well as a higher and better treatment of those who are to be its future proprietors. Is there any mode by which that result can be more generally and successfully promoted than through the establishment of these national colleges? Certainly none are offered, none are visible, at home or abroad.

Let it be borne in mind that the products of farms depend not more upon their fertility than upon the intelligence of their occupants. Ireland is a land of great fertility, but has not been overstocked with schools; while Scotland is far less fertile, and has a much rougher climate, but it has long been famed for the universality of its schools. The result is that Ireland has not been free from famine, and her population departs in droves to other lands; while in Scotland,

O'er a' the ills o' life victorious—

you not only cannot starve a Scotchman, but the population thrive by intelligent industry and is constantly on the increase.

Notwithstanding the immense interest in farms and farmers, the General Government, possibly still the largest land-holder of the world, has yet done little, very little, for agriculture, even less than many European governments. Only 15,000,000 acres, all told, have been granted under the land grant to the national colleges of 1862, and this covers all that has been done in behalf of a higher education, not only for the millions engaged in agriculture, but for the 2,707,421 persons engaged in mechanical, manufacturing, and mining pursuits. Commerce, with its light-houses, harbors, breakwaters, buoys, coast-surveys, and naval protection, has sometimes absorbed more in a single year than all that for eighty years has been done and all that it is now for coming ages proposed to do for agriculture.

I begrudge nothing to commerce; but agriculture and the mechanic arts deserve a more liberal recognition, and those employed in these pursuits, as worthy as the worthiest, can have but little respect or tenderness for any fallacies or grim humors brought forth to exclude their claims. The grand extent and dignity of agriculture cannot be safely or wisely ignored by any men or any parties in America, where it is probable that more real farms are owned, and practically worked by the owners, than in all of Europe. Tradesmen may fail, commerce may suffer shipwreck, railroads may bring their owners and creditors to grief, banks may stop payment, but the farmers never stop; they face all vicissitudes of trade and of adverse seasons, face even sneering neglect, and, standing to their noble but unambitious calling, are never less than the backbone of the State. Though the world turns round, though the flood comes and the winds blow, every farmer, planted on the deep foundations of his own homestead, feels that beyond all peradventure this is mine.

IMPORTANCE OF SKILLED LABOR.

Perhaps there are few questions of higher moment than the future of our industrial and mechanical trades. The throng of foreign artisans and mechanics annually coming to our shores are eager for places at the head, and our own men must be made superior, or at least equal in skill, or they may be driven from their employments, and perhaps from their homes. In many departments of industry the longer ex-

perience of Europe, and more regular apprenticeship, gives to their best workmen some rather formidable advantages. This, with the imported barbarous despotism reigning over our "trades unions," restricting the number of apprentices among the masters, not unlike the tyranny of wild horses, which kill off male colts, is tending to cripple the progressive growth of native mechanics, and the number of young men now seeking to learn trades is unnaturally circumscribed. The only remedy for this is a higher standard of technical education for our own workmen, who should, with all their inborn aptitudes fully developed, everywhere aim to be the best, and no more be outstripped in the quality of their work than they are in the quantity.

A BENEFIT TO ALL OTHER COLLEGES.

A general advance in the scholarship of farmers and mechanics, of merchants and manufacturers, or of the population at large, cannot prove detrimental to men in the so-called learned professions or to literary colleges. All these would be stimulated beyond a doubt to make a greater advance and take up a higher position than that now held, as there is indefinite room; but this should be hailed as a high recommendation, one of the exalted benefits to accrue from the establishment of the national colleges, and could not be construed as incompatible with the standing and prosperity of existing literary institutions. If any officers among the latter should anywhere exhibit skepticism and exceptional jealousy respecting a higher education for the industrial population, as very few have done and less will do, it would justify the charge, not entirely new, that they are too much actuated by either monastic or aristocratic bigotry, and deserve pity for their palpable lack of sympathy with popular institutions. I feel sure that no true American will ever prize his own education higher because there may be others who cannot get it; and the purpose here is to increase the usefulness of the colleges we have created, not the demolition of the old.

AMERICAN INVENTIONS.

Among the conspicuous evidences of comparative intellectual and industrial activity of the people of different States may be reckoned their inventive power, as exhibited by the number of original patents annually obtained for new and useful inventions. These require elaborate thought, intricate and dexterous combination of ideas, and the practical application of scientific principles. Wherever enlightened and active industry prevails, the people will be found to have a decided aptitude for devising and constructing labor-saving instrumentalities—confirming Franklin's humorous definition of man as "an animal who makes tools"—though not so much for the object of saving labor as for increasing the rapidity of production and improving the quality of the product. It is the triumph of brain-power, which once put in motion by schools and colleges never stops, but keeps on to the end of life. One success is an incitement to fresh ventures and the inspiration which leads others to kindred efforts. Perhaps we have no reason to be dissatisfied with our present record when contrasted with that of other nations, as it will show four times the number of patents annually issued compared with Great Britain, notwithstanding that no applicant there is refused, questions of interference being left to the courts, while here nearly one-third are rejected for reasons of conflict, lack of priority, or inutility. It is even possible that we are as well known abroad for our Yankee inventions as for anything else.

The State of Michigan, largely agricultural, is young and vigorous, just out of its teens, and yet in 1873 there were 356 inventors, or one annually to every 3,326 of her people; but South Carolina, one of the old "thirteen," unfortunately deficient in schools and colleges, had only 25, or one to every 28,224 of her people. The State of Connecticut, crowded with manufactures and the mechanic arts, leads off in the same year with 622 inventors, or one to every 864 of her people; while in New Mexico, nearly barren of educational institutions, there was only one patent issued among a population of over 91,000. Michigan and Connecticut are blest, not only with the best system of common schools, but with higher institutions of learning among the foremost in the land. These States stand in the front rank as to wealth and education, and there can hardly be a better illustration of the fact than the number of patents annually won by their people. They are constantly surprising their contemporaries by something new, that will lighten labor and benefit the world.

Patents were first devised to secure titles of nobility, but when they were at length used to secure the titles of the inventors to the cut-nail machine, the American reaper, the sewing-machine, and the electric telegraph, they were used for a far nobler purpose. Here are titles of nobility, not incompatible with republican institutions, but adorning and giving luster to the pedigree of the humblest citizen.

"The nation most quickly promoting the intellectual development of its industrial population," says Justus Liebig, "must advance, as surely as the country neglecting it must inevitably retrograde."

The world is beginning to comprehend this profound truth. The vaunting of our superiority over what we esteem the less favored portions of mankind, while they are steadily advancing, will beget a complacent stand-still policy, and too late we may find that we have much to learn, as we found at the London exhibition, as the British found at the Paris exposition, and as the French found while held by the mailed hand of better-educated Prussia.

THE CENTENNIAL.

Our Centennial will truly exhibit a young nation of wonderful promise, but the disclosure of deficiencies sure to occur—when we shall "see ourselves as others see us"—will be a lesson not least to be prized if it shall cure the small amount of conceit to which in our modest moods we sometimes slyly and reluctantly confess. Of course we can "whip all creation," nevertheless it may not be well to challenge such a strain oftener than centennially. Modern civilization, the arts, trade, and commerce, bring out the relative value of the masses, and nations no longer conquer and are no longer judged by the brilliant career of a single successful leader. The combined power of the people, their aggregate force and their general intelligence, gives the chief luster to and mainly determines the destiny of nations. The power of educated force and skill is pre-eminently the great gift to man, and brings in its train not only intellectual wealth but material and political independence. It does not attempt to "cut blocks with a razor," nor to fit round holes with square plugs. Why do we at so much cost open many mines only to find at last nothing to show but a hole in the ground? More special previous training might preclude this not uncommon grief. Why are so many of our railroads non-paying investments? Largely because they have been unscientifically located, and then built not only prematurely, or in advance of any business support, but with a lavish disregard of expenditure. It has been computed that not less than several hundred millions of

dollars have been lost in the United States by inferior and faulty railroad engineering. Certainly the over \$4,000,000,000 invested is now barely worth half the cost. Germany, far better educated in this respect, obtains large revenues from railroads, and constructs them more scientifically, and even with a praiseworthy parsimony, as we might have done, if national colleges in every State had furnished engineers with the appropriate training. In the time of Plato, as he says, "you could buy a common builder for five or six minæ at most, but for a master-workman not even for ten thousand drachmæ, for there are few of them even among all the Greeks." That is to say, the master-workman was then worth twenty times the price of a common laborer. There and here men are no longer slaves, but the difference in their personal valuation has not diminished by lapse of time.

EDUCATED MEN.

But beyond the calculation of mere dollars and cents, it may be regarded as an axiom that where the masses are educated, there will be a nation of patriots, strongly devoted to the principles of civil liberty and observant of the laws of a stable government. Such men build up and do not tear down. One thoroughly educated man exerts an influence over an entire neighborhood, sometimes throughout the state and nation; but the influence of a well-directed college is much more extensive and much more permanent. The latter is a perennial fountain, always pouring forth a living stream of moral and intellectual missionaries. Generation after generation may pass away, but the college never dies. Our national colleges, fitted for their work, are not servile copies of previously existing institutions, whether at home or abroad; but, though different, are intended to be in the progress of time not inferior in character and completeness to any in the world—capable of a continuous and healthy growth, and in entire harmony with the wants and sentiments of the American people and of the age. They will tend to produce unity, amity, and equality among States widely separated, but going hand in hand to the end of time. They will make a perpetual contribution to the political strength and the intellectual stamina of our country, which is to be forever governed by the people; and the great question now to be solved is whether it shall be well governed by an educated, vigorous, and virtuous people, or be dragged down by the preponderance of illiterate and blundering imbecility, as the conspicuous wreck of the last vain hope of mankind.

TEACHERS.

It has been conceded by nearly all of the profoundest thinkers upon the subject that the speediest way to promote general education is first to establish institutions where the highest and most thorough culture can be obtained, as a true standard of excellence, and in order to furnish the best tools for future work, or to supply a full corps of competent teachers for the preparatory and common schools. Expenditures to sustain incompetent teachers are not only a positive waste of money but an irreparable waste of time on the part of scholars. We are young but once, and, if untaught or ill-taught then, few will wonder or lament if our dust shall steal in silence to the "tombs of short memories." The old English proverb ran, "It is as good to be unborn as unbred."

In all of the States there is a great want of thoroughly qualified teachers. The poorly qualified so largely outnumber the better sort and so largely underbid in the matter of wages that they have brought

discredit upon the profession. Competent teachers, who should be retained for life, shun the ridicule heaped upon the whole class of temporary pedagogues and jump out of the profession at the first opportunity. Elevate the whole class and there will arise an *esprit de corps* that will permanently protect its own reputation.

This want of proper teachers is not only very conspicuous in the Southern States, and so to continue until an indigenous supply can be provided, but the want pervades all of the Northern States, apparently becoming year by year more aggravated, and only populous cities and large towns now secure the best class of teachers. The rural districts for the most part maintain school-mistresses, who quickly manage "to step down and out" by getting married, and but a few of the sex of which Dominie Sampson and Ichabod Crane were such shining ornaments.

In the message of the governor* of Pennsylvania of January, 1874, we have the "startling declaration" that 15,003 persons in that great and prosperous Commonwealth received certificates as teachers in common schools, but only 374 of this multitude "were found to have a thorough knowledge of reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and grammar." Certainly that State is not alone deficient or in danger of falling into the ditch by employing the blind to lead the blind.

If good teachers are sadly needed in Northern States, are there not abundant reasons to suppose that they may be needed elsewhere?

The national colleges in the Southern States are thus far sending out a very large part of all their graduates as teachers. There is a constantly increasing demand for them, and, being mostly to the "manner born," they escape the jealousy to which teachers from distant States have often been and long will be subjected. These colleges will assuredly make large additions to the stock of thoroughly-trained educators, and those that are incompetent are always unattractive and profitless to the pupils most in need. If there were no other work for national colleges, here is enough and sufficiently important to repay all of their present and prospective cost. It is manifestly an indispensable prerequisite to the foundation and maintenance of common schools that a regular army of proper teachers, more than one lesson in advance of the pupils, should first be created and composed of those who will be most in harmony with our civilization, life, and Government.

NO JEALOUSY AMONG INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING.

The national colleges, unlike some other more favored institutions, have not been so enriched by endowments as to be made too proud to ask for more, nor are they so envious of the prosperity of others as to view with alarm efforts made to multiply American institutions of learning, or to make them stronger and of greater utility. They are young, scarcely half-fledged, and confess their immaturity; but they start at a time when most needed, and, young as they are, show that they are beginning a work of great magnitude, truly American in character, which has not been done and will not be done without their assistance. They modestly but firmly stand on their own merits, interfering with nobody, except to offer a liberal education, not too greatly encumbered by old traditions, and abreast with the advance of the present times, that will be accepted by many instead of by a few, to whom it will be more available because tendered at less cost, and better because of more flexibility with reference to their taste,

* Annual message of Governor Hartranft.

habits, and position in life. A leading object has been and will be to reach out and to include more of those, to be gathered nowhere else, who can be made of greater value to their country through a higher development of their natural faculties, by bringing out the gold that is in them as well as the iron.

With an institution of this kind in each State, all the local wants, however various and widely apart, can be wisely studied and provided for, and many young men will obtain near at home a sound mental training who might otherwise never have been prompted to make the necessary effort, or, if prompted, might not have been able to afford the expenditure and loss which would be involved in its pursuit by a deduction of four years from remunerative industry, including also a costly pilgrimage to more distant and expensive establishments. Having an opportunity to acquire an education which will plant the foundations that serve to some extent to support pursuits or professions previously chosen, they will not be driven at the last moment to choose abruptly a profession to fit their education.

Some of the time-honored literary institutions, needing nothing; ask nothing for themselves, and it would be passing strange if they should complain of any Government favor to others. Far above the reach of rivalry, grandly subsidized by private endowments, and encouraged by the loyal support of their ever-swarming alumni, it cannot be supposed they would foreclose and deny everywhere to others all support, and, "like an Eastern despot," to use the words of Bacon, "strangle their rivals in order to reign peaceably."

If the Government, however, is to do anything, it cannot attempt indiscriminate aid, and certainly need not help those in no want of help, but must make its selection so as to benefit the largest and most meritorious numbers among the industrial classes who fail to find existing and accessible institutions adapted to their special wants. The proposed grant will place no national college upon an equal footing with many of those which are already rich, and which it is to be hoped will be too proud and too generous to exhibit any jealousy of the prosperity of others; for, with their troops of active friends already organized, even when any calamity overtakes them it only foreshadows a larger measure of prosperity, or proves the signal of fresh bounties from those who seem more ready to give than are the afflicted to ask.

But can a few literary institutions, renowned and opulent as they may be, with all other similar but less favored institutions following with unequal steps in their wake, do the educational work of Texas, of Kansas, of Mississippi and North Carolina, as well as of all the other States? In all or nearly all of the old literary colleges, as has been shown, they have but 25,010 students, of whom less than one-fourth graduate annually; and thus they turn out not many more than five thousand educated young men annually for the whole of our forty-six States and Territories, or not enough to furnish one in ten of the civil service of the United States. Can that be considered adequate to the full requirements of 44,000,000 of people, having an annual increase of males alone of not less than 500,000? On the contrary, it is furnishing a sadly inadequate equipment. One thoroughly educated boy in a thousand is not enough. It will not leaven the whole lump. We require the seeds of a more advanced educational culture to be planted where they will grow and ultimately be diffused over all parts of the land, leaving no Bæotian deserts, and, when diffused, that the benefit shall accrue to all classes of the community and even to the land itself.

No well-established institution fears to be outrun, nor will any one

attempt to monopolize the whole work of higher education or seek to stand as a central luminary in whose presence all others must "pale their ineffectual fire." Education as a monopoly would be the direst and most odious of all monopolies. But a broad and popular system should disseminate more universally a higher as well as a common-school education in each and every State. No portion of our country should be left as a possible future wilderness of ignorance. Seats of ample learning on one edge only of the Republic would be like a beautiful garden on one side of an immense estate with all of the remainder left barren and desolate or thick set with weeds and brambles. (Men trained and fitted for any and every duty must be grown and ripened in the localities where wanted in order that, whenever a first-class man of science or learning seems to be required in any vocation or position, no State shall be found deficient and be compelled to submit to the weak and uncertain dependence of transplanting the unemployed surplus, the cheapest floating stock of more distant regions.) American States, unlike those of ancient Greece, will ever be reluctant to send to Sparta for commanders.

CONCLUSION.

No Senator ever speaks without some impression, more or less profound, of the importance of his subject. If I have erred in this estimate by trespassing so long upon the patience of the Senate, I crave that charity which others may need when embarrassed by the diversity and abundance of the facts and details to be submitted. I have endeavored to point out—

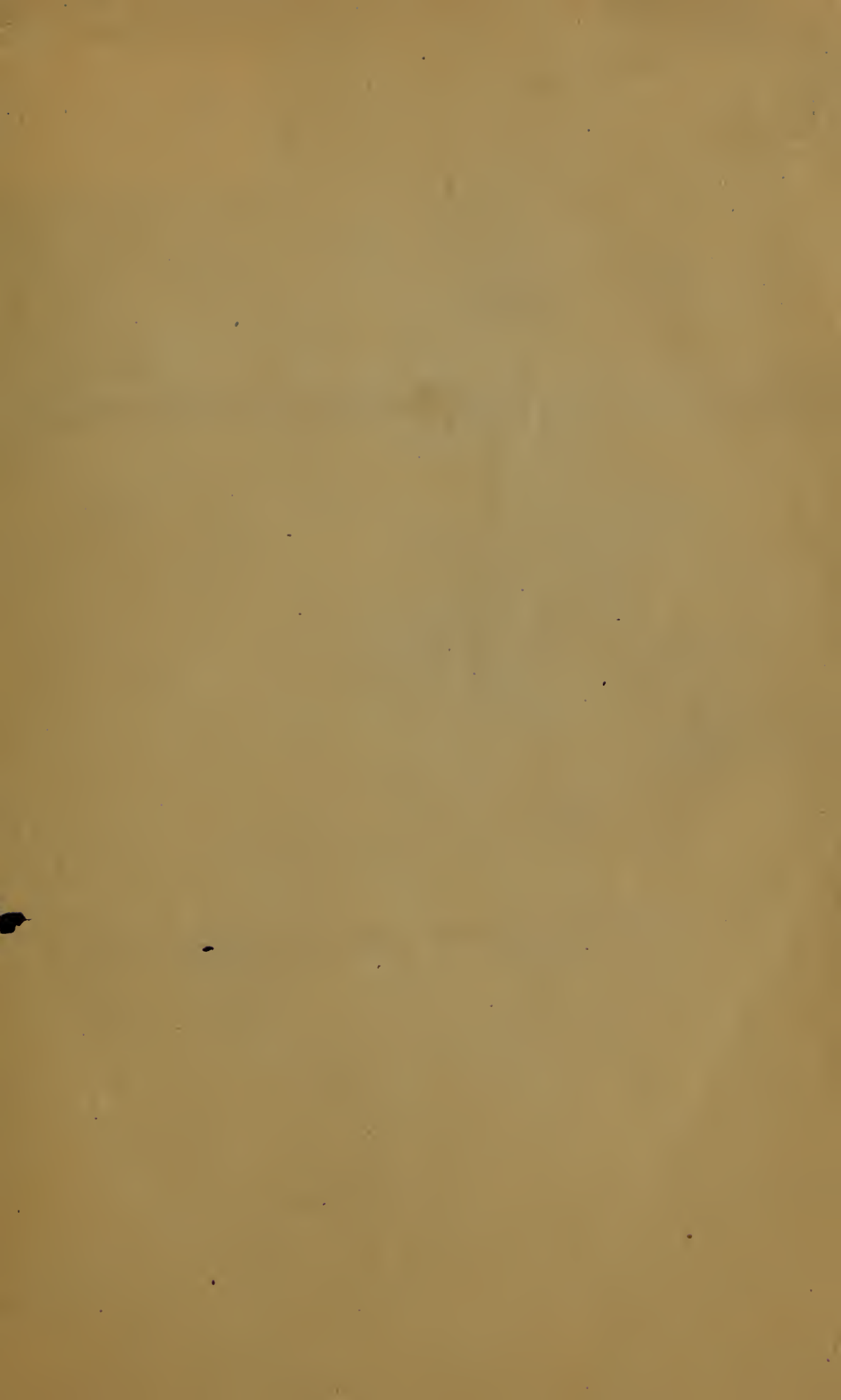
First. That the fund to arise from all sales of public lands must hereafter be very inconsiderable. Whatever the extent of the public domains may be, it is growing less year by year, and the homestead demands, by foreign immigrants and by the hundreds of thousands of American citizens annually arriving at their majority, are steadily increasing. Surely the small dribblets remaining to be actually sold ought to be consecrated, in accordance with the conditions set forth in our title deeds, to "schools and the means of education" for the permanent and universal benefit of the people.

Second. That more aid to common schools of a better type is needed in every quarter of our Union and that it is much wiser to give to youth assurance and faith in a higher life, than to provide dungeons for manhood.

Third. That the number of those who are being thoroughly educated is disproportionately small, and that colleges to which many more of all the industrial classes might resort are not only vitally important but are loudly demanded by all those who do not hold an education to be a baneful luxury from which all the indigent and industrious, as so many born dunces, are to be excluded in the lump.

Fourth. That, while it is not proposed to divert any funds from the Treasury that will not yield a fourfold return, the objects aimed at are more precious than gold or silver, and a higher and more universal education will yoke neither the people nor the Treasury with poverty.

Finally, may I not invoke favor to such legislation as not infrequently makes men better than the law, that will tend to kindle a national passion to have Americans as a whole become the best educated of any people in the world, that will attach them more ardently to a free government than to any other known to mankind, that will inspire some ambition to excel in the arts of peace as well as in the arts of war, and bring forth that wisdom which gives security and progress to society, and which may serve to make our native land and its ever-increasing millions of people eminent in the future annals of time for all the virtues required to adorn character or race among the nations of the earth?

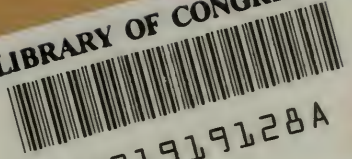


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